Special efforts are being made to present to the world the wonder that is India—wonder not only in terms of beauties and bounties of nature but also in terms of a civilisation that was born, bred and beckoned here and also beamed outside its geographical frontiers and left its imprints as far as Bahamia in Afghanistan in North-West and Cambodia in the East; a civilisation that sprang up from an original and powerful mind and created three of the five greatest thought processes in the world, namely, Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism.

Government's overall endeavour is to ensure that the tourist to India should get physically invigorated, mentally rejuvenated, culturally enriched and spiritually elevated. And on return to his country, he should feel India within him.

Comprehensive tourism policy

584. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:
DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) by when Government are going to bring before Parliament a comprehensive tourism policy to attract tourists in the country;

(b) the salient features of the proposed policy;

(c) to what extent the tourism industry has suffered after the September 11th attacks on the USA;

(d) whether Government have identified any areas for drastic reforms and modernisation to attract tourists; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) and (b) The draft of the Tourism Policy was discussed in the Chief Ministers' and State Tourism Ministers' Conference held on 30th October, 2001 to obtain the views of the State Governments on the various issues. Government is taking action to finalise it soon. The salient features of the draft policy are as follows:—

- Providing for peoples participation in the development of tourism and in sharing the benefits of tourism.

- Facilitating the development of a dynamic private sector in tourism industry.
- Co-ordinating the efforts of different Government Departments and agencies in making India a tourism friendly country, and in providing the required infrastructure.
- Facilitating domestic tourism by promoting amenities and facilities for budget tourists.
- Integrated development of identified tourist destinations with the involvement of all the infrastructural Departments/State Governments and the private sector.
- Development of tourism in the North East, Himalayan region, Jammu and Kashmir and the Islands of Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep, as part of overall strategy of economic development of the regions.
- Enhancing outlay for infrastructure.
- Enacting suitable legislation on travel trade/Tourist Police for protection and security of tourists.
- Liberalization of the visa regime.
- Integrated development of islands.
- Uniformity and rationalization in taxation structure.
- Focussed marketing including advertising in overseas markets.

(c) There has been a decline of about 20 per cent in the foreign tourist arrivals and 16 per cent in the foreign exchange earnings through tourism in the two months of September and October, 2001 as compared to the same period of the year 2000.

(d) and (e) The areas identified for development include holy and haloed places like Varanasi, Bodhgaya, Elora and Ajanta, etc.

Seven Point Programme for promotion of tourism

585. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have laid down a Seven Point Programme for promotion of tourism in the country; and